this because it is a very important issue (*Interruptions*)

MR SPEAKER Question No 477

[*Translation*]

Computer Literacy and Studies

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*477 DR MAHADEEPAK SINGH SHAKYA
SHRI JAGMIT SINGH

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state

(a) whether a scheme for Computer Literacy and Studies in Schools was launched in 1984,

(b) if so, the number of schools where this project was launched,

(c) the expenditure incurred so far on its implementation,

(d) the number of schools where this scheme is still continuing, and

(e) whether the Government propose to seek the cooperation of private sector in this regard?

*[*English*]

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH) (a) Yes, Sir

(b) In 1984-85 248 schools were covered

(c) Rs 38 34 crores

(d) 2598 schools

(e) In the Review of the Project a question has arisen whether setting up an integrated input delivery system by involving agencies in the private sector having expertise in Computer Education would result in a more effective implementation of the Project The issue is being examined and no final decision has been taken

DR MAHADEEPAK SINGH SHAKYA Mr Speaker, Sir, while launching the pilot project regarding computer education in 1984-85 the Government had announced that this project would be implemented in this entire country However, the date furnished by the Hon Minister in this regard State that merely 248 schools have been covered under this project and a total amount of Rs 38 34 crores has been incurred on it Mr Speaker, Sir, in this context, I would like to know from the hon Minister the number of schools statewise and district wise which have been covered under it and the number of students statewise who are receiving computer education in these schools

SHRI ARJUN SINGH Sir, I can give information in this regard, provided a separate notice is given for it

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WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[*English*]

Rise in Prices of Books

*472 SHRI UTTAMRAO DEORAO PATIL
SHRI YASHWANTRAO PATIL

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state

(a) whether there has been a steep rise in the prices of academic books,

(b) if so, the reasons therefor,

(c) the steps taken by the Government to contain the prices of books;

(d) whether some States have demanded subsidy in this regard; and

(e) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) and (b). There has been increase in the prices of books due to increase in the price of paper, printing charges and other costs.

(c) In pursuance of the resolve expressed in the National Policy on Education 1986 to make available quality books at low prices, several measures are continuing at Government level. The Central Government initiative for school students of classes I - XII is implemented through the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). The pricing of NCERT text books is done on a no-profit no- loss basis. The Council does not price its text books for classes I - VII beyond Rs. 15/- and absorbs the losses, if any. The National Book Trust operates a scheme of subsidised publication of university level text/reference books and technical books of diploma level. The University Grants Commission also provides development grants to universities and colleges, inter-alia for purchase of books by the institutions.

Till 31st March, 1990, the Central Government supplied white printing paper at subsidised rates to States/Union Territories for the production of school text books and exercise books to make them available to the students at reasonable prices.

(d) and (e). Some States have requested for the revival of the scheme for subsidised supply of white printing paper. The matter is under consideration of Government.

Mining in Forest Areas

*474. SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria fixed for according clearance to mining in forests areas;

(b) whether the permission for obtaining clearance for mining in forest areas has become difficult; and

(c) if so, whether the Government propose to simplify the procedure for the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RANGARAJAN KUMARAMANGALAM): (a) to (c). The proposals for diversion of forest land for mining are required to be sent to the Central Government in the prescribed proformay alongwith relevant information. After all the essential information is received from the State/Union Territory Governments, the proposals are examined and decided on merits expeditiously. Detailed Guidelines have been issued in this regard. Now, it has been decided to modify the Guidelines to furthers streamline the examination of proposals under the Forest (Conservation) Act.

[*Translation*]

Plantation of Red Oil Palm

*478. SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA:
SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have imposed a ban on plantation of red oil palm in